

Aviation Warfighters' Forum (AvWfF)

What is it?

The AvWfF initiative is a web-based knowledge sharing capability residing within Army Knowledge Online (AKO) and was established to enhance training, readiness, leader development and collaboration, and information sharing between the operating and generating forces.

What has Army Aviation done?

The AvWfF was established in December 2009 and is currently administered at the U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence (USAACE) Knowledge Management Office (KMO) in support of USAACE's various KM initiatives. The Army's new doctrine on Knowledge Management (KM), Field Manual 6-01.1, *Knowledge Management Section*, defines KM as "the art of creating, organizing, applying, and transferring knowledge to facilitate situational understanding and decision making.

The AvWfF was the first step in a long process to fully develop a KM capability across a distributed environment. Below is a summary of the first generation tools and features currently found on the AvWfF site.

- Accessible through Army Knowledge Online (AKO) authentication procedures. Members use AKO Single Sign-On (AKO SSO) protocols, which means users sign-on via AKO. All sites visited from the AvWfF during that current session should recognize the original AKO sign on, thereby reducing the user's workload.
- Links to other information sources and sites. Links have been developed to other key WfF sites and forums. The *WfF Navigation* channel (left side of screen just below the commanding general's message box) connects users to other branch areas. Additionally, below the *WfF Navigation* channel is a channel called *AvWfF Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel and Facilities (DOTMLPF) Links*. This represents efforts to link users with the key organizations on Fort Rucker responsible for specific DOTMLPF issues. This site is still being worked and changes will be implemented as they become available.
- A knowledge base (repository). Established links to *AKO Files* allow the posting of UNCLASSIFIED and UNCLASSIFIED For Official Use Only information. The goal is to reduce overall e-mail traffic by sharing critical information via a centralized storage site. Given the prohibition on "thumb drives," this files storage area allows travelers to go on temporary duty yet maintain access to their files via AKO.
- Synchronous collaborative capability. A link to *Defense Connect Online* (DCO) sites has been provided. DCO is a tool that enables virtual team meetings. The DCO site (<https://www.dco.dod.mil>) has additional information available.
- Asynchronous collaborating capability. While AKO does have a simple message posting capability, the USAACE KMO decided to incorporate the Battle Command Knowledge System (BCKS) Professional Forums to support professional collaboration on aviation topics. This effort is called Aviation NET which can be accessed directly or from the AvWfF site. This is the direct link to Aviation NET:

<https://forums.bcks.army.mil/secure/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=690446&lang=en-US>

Our trained Battle Command Knowledge System (BCKS) facilitator designs, develops and maintains Aviation NET. Recommended changes can be posted in Aviation NET.

Using capabilities established through the WfF, USAACE is working to enhance for vetting and resolving pertinent issues and lessons learned.

What continued efforts does Army Aviation have planned for the future?

The AvWfF is a constantly-evolving site that will continue to improve in content, navigation and utility. Using the *AvWfF Request for Information* Channel or the *AvWfF WebPage Suggestions* Channel provides users the forum to offer constructive feedback to make this site better.

KMO is also looking at ways to support more robust SIPR collaboration capabilities. USAACE Directorate of Training and Doctrine (DOTD) currently supports a Secure Internet Protocol Router (SIPR)-based Tactics Portal (<https://www.usaawc.army.smil.mil>) that can be incorporated into a larger USAACE effort. We have recently initiated an Aviation Warfighters' Forum SIPR (AvWfF-S) to exploit information sharing opportunities within the SIPR domain. The address is <https://www.us.army.smil.mil/suite/grouppage/12984>.

In 2010, USAACE KMO will be taking action to develop or enhance the following initiatives:

- Enhance Lessons Learned Integration;
- Implement Non-classified Internet Protocol Router (NIPR) and SIPR Access;
- Develop Web tools to enable better access to information;
- Develop Knowledge Maps; and
- Develop new USAACE work sites and improve existing sites.

Why is this important to the Army and Army Aviation?

Our ability to improve the linkage between “people, processes, technology and tools” will enhance information sharing between the operating and generating forces of Army Aviation. This capability has the potential to change the way Army Aviation trains and prepares for war. It recognizes and reinforces the way a new generation of Soldiers and leaders think and interact by capitalizing on a key pillar of knowledge management: One [person] learns and everyone knows. To operate in today’s information domain, our aviation leaders must:

- Have access to information and knowledge anytime and from any location to enhance their decision making;
- Exploit capabilities of experience at the “edge” of the network;
- Develop and enhance new concepts and capabilities in a collaborative manner;
- Enable self-learning opportunities; and
- Enable rapid development and dissemination of training and doctrine material.

As of: 22 Mar 2010